

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 5, 2023

Alison Barkoff
Acting Administrator and Assistant Secretary for Aging
Administration for Community Living
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
330 C St SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Acting Administrator Barkoff,

I write in support of the Council on Aging Southern California's (the Council) application for the five-year Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) State Project Grant. In helping older adults and individuals with disabilities navigate their health care options, this proposal would advance the Administration for Community Living's mission of empowering and promoting independence for all communities.

As Representative of California's 47th Congressional District, I hear regularly from my constituents on threats to the health and wellbeing of our most vulnerable communities. Among these concerns has been an increase in schemes attempting to defraud the millions of older adults and people with disabilities who rely on Medicare for health coverage. In California, a recent spike in fraudulent Medicare hospice enrollments underscores the urgent need to support fraud prevention, awareness, and recovery. The SMP program has worked at the community level to bring these resources to those most at-risk of Medicare fraud and abuse – lowering costs for patients and taxpayers alike.

The Council has been an invaluable partner in this effort by overseeing the regional SMP program in California, helping meet the needs of the largest Medicare population in the country. If approved, this grant will help the Council to continue investing in proven, community-based approaches to fraud prevention that protect consumers and connect patients to the care they need. This grant will support the Council's direct outreach to Medicare beneficiaries through one-on-one counseling, presentations at community events, an active helpline, and other essential services. It will also allow the Council to better connect with Southern Californians enrolled in Medicare by expanding its capacity to recruit and train volunteers. The Council has been a productive partner with my office in disseminating knowledge to the communities I represent. My office will continue to solicit input from stakeholders and convene discussions to equip the Council and its staff with information it needs to protect Medicare populations at both the national and local levels.

I look forward to working with the Council should this grant request be approved. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact my District Office at (949) 668-6600.

Very truly yours,

Katie Porter
Member of Congress